



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

In the Matter of Occupational  
Therapy Assistant, Department of  
Human Services

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE CHAIR/  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

CSC Docket No. 2024-2428

Job Reevaluation Appeal

**ISSUED: February 14, 2025 (HS)**

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Patrick Moses appeals the Change in the State Classification Plan reevaluating the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) title from class code 14 to class code 15. The appellant seeks an evaluation of class code 18.

As background, the appellant petitioned the Division of Agency Services (Agency Services) for a reevaluation of the subject title. In support of his request, the appellant stated that the OTA is now allowed to have more independence with the development of programs, and the title performs a number of new job duties such as maintaining patient caseloads; managing entire cottages; overseeing programs, meetings, clinics, and development of department forms; instruction of occupational therapy orientation programs; training of new facility staff; updating facility staff regarding changes to the patients' programs and activities of daily living status; and coordination with college fieldwork supervisors overseeing new OTA and Occupational Therapist students who are working toward completion of their degrees. In response, Agency Services provided the appointing authority with a proposed job specification, which the appointing authority deemed satisfactory. Ultimately, Agency Services determined that the know-how and problem solving factors for the subject title had increased based on the increased scope and complexity of the work, warranting an upward reevaluation of one class code for OTA.

On appeal, the appellant complains that the class code increase was lower than he was expecting. He also points to the disparity between OTAs and other healthcare

professionals within the State that have similar knowledge and responsibilities but are assigned a higher range/code. The appellant also asserts that he had no clear guidance on the criteria for a reevaluation.

## CONCLUSION

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-4.2(a) provides that State service job titles are evaluated, and existing titles reevaluated, based on the New Jersey Job Content Evaluation System and that “class codes” shall be designated for job titles through this evaluation process. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:1-1.3 defines a “class code” as a designation assigned to job titles in State service with ranking based upon an evaluation of job content.

*N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-4.3(b) provides that a request for a reevaluation must identify and explain the areas of substantive change in job content or other change in job evaluation factors through written narrative and a revised job specification, which shall be marked to indicate changes, and include evidence that the change in job content affects all employees in the title. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-4.3(d) provides that appeals shall contain all information which was presented to the prior level, a statement identifying the specific portions of the prior level determination being contested, and the basis for appeal. *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-4.3(e) provides that information and/or argument which was not presented at a prior level of appeal shall not be considered.

An appropriate job reevaluation is based on an analysis of the job content factors and whether or not there has been a significant change in them over time. The factors of know-how, problem-solving, and accountability as required by the title series are the criteria which are analyzed as part of a job reevaluation to determine the appropriate levels of salary compensation. *See In the Matter of Motor Carriers Title Series* (CSC, decided November 7, 2008).

Pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 4A:3-4.3(b), evidence of substantive change in job content is the basis for reevaluation of a title. Substantive change in job content is documented evidence of higher-level work than that explicitly or implicitly defined in the current job specification. Thus, knowledge of the mechanics of the New Jersey Job Content Evaluation System is not necessary for a successful request. It is noted that jobs may change without a substantial change in job content. For example, due to changes in technology, individuals serving in the State Office Centrex Operator title series who had used manual or mechanical means to perform assigned tasks, were subsequently required to do so electronically. Thus, while the medium used changed, the essential tasks of the job did not. *See In the Matter of State Office Centrex Operator Title Series* (Commissioner of Personnel, decided August 14, 1990). *See also In the Matter of Crew Supervisor Mechanics and Assistant Crew Supervisor Mechanics* (Commissioner of Personnel, decided January 25, 1990).

Know-how speaks to the sum total of every kind of skill, however gained, required for successful performance on the job; problem-solving refers to the original “self-starting” thinking required for the job for analyzing, evaluating, creating, reasoning, arriving at, and making conclusions; and accountability is the measure of answerability for an action and for the consequences thereof on the part of an incumbent in the title (stated in terms of dollar impact).

In this case, it is clear that the duties of an OTA have evolved over time to include additional and more complex duties. The increased knowledge and skills needed to adequately perform these duties positively impacted the compensable factor of know-how, resulting in a higher know-how point value from the previous evaluation. The know-how rating is composed of three dimensions: human relations, managerial, and technical skills. The human relations skills range from 1, Basic, to 3, Critical; technical skills are rated from A, Primary, to I, Eminent Authority; and managerial skills are rated from I, Limited, to VI, Total. For example, the prior know-how factor for OTA was CI3 152. In other words, the position was considered that of a Vocational professional (C) working primarily within a single activity with appropriate concern for related activities, or “Limited” (I), and alternative or combined skills in understanding, servicing, developing, and motivating people are important in the highest degree, or “Critical” (3). In accordance with the New Jersey Job Content Evaluation System, these factors equate to 152 know-how points. The current know-how evaluation, after consideration of the information presented, is DI2 175. Thus, the position is considered that of an Advanced Vocational professional (D) working primarily within a single activity with appropriate concern for related activities, or “Limited” (I), and understanding, influencing, or serving people are “Important” considerations (2). In other words, the evaluation appropriately recognized that the increased scope and complexity of work positively impacted the know-how factor. The appellant has not shown that the know-how score for the title was not properly increased.<sup>1</sup>

Further, the increase in complexity positively impacted the compensable element of problem-solving. In the prior evaluation, the subject title’s problem-solving factor was C3 (25%) 38. In other words, an incumbent’s thinking is guided and circumscribed by somewhat diversified procedures and precedents (C) involving differing situations requiring search for solutions within area of learned things, or “Interpolative” (3) approximately 25% of the time (the scale is either 25% or 29%). Conversely, the current problem-solving factor, while also assigned C3 (25%), had a corresponding increase due to the increased know-how score. Thus, the know-how score of 175 for the current evaluation increased the problem-solving score to 43. Once again, the appellant has not demonstrated that the problem-solving score was not properly increased.

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<sup>1</sup> Agency Services has advised that even if the human relations skills dimension had remained “Critical” (3), there would be no impact to the know-how score of 175 and thus no impact to the overall evaluation.

The reevaluation found the compensable factor of accountability for the subject title remained unchanged. Accountability is evaluated based on an incumbent's freedom to act, from prescribed actions up to Governor/Chief Justice (A to D), with an annual impact magnitude measured from under \$100 million to over \$2 billion (1 to 6), with either a remote, contributory, shared, or primary impact (R,C,S, or P). Incumbents in the title have always been required to, under direction, assist in administering varied types of occupational therapy services to clients to restore function or maintain present function, prevent further disability, and assist clients to achieve their maximum potential. The subject title's evaluation factor for accountability remains C1C (43). In other words, an incumbent's freedom to act, by the nature or size of the job, is subject, wholly or in part, to standardized practice and procedures; general work instructions; and supervision of progress and results, or "standardized" (C), and the impact of their decisions, on an annual basis, is under \$100 million (1), but they have a "contributory" (C) impact on end results. Thus, the answerability for an action on the part of an incumbent and the consequences thereof have not changed. Therefore, there is no evidence that the accountability score should be increased.

Based on the above, the evaluation for OTA resulted in a score of DI2 (175) C3 25% (43) C1C (43) for a total of 261 points. In accordance with the New Jersey Job Content Evaluation System, a total score between 252 and 276 converts to a class code 15. Accordingly, since the OTA title is a 40-hour workweek title, it was appropriately slotted into salary range 16.

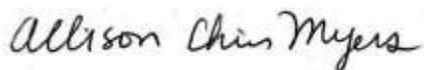
Accordingly, the appellant has not demonstrated that the change in job content was significant enough to warrant anything more than the one-class code upward reevaluation already determined appropriate.

### **ORDER**

Therefore, it is ordered that this appeal be denied.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED ON  
THE 6<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2025



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Allison Chris Myers  
Chair/Chief Executive Officer  
Civil Service Commission

Inquiries  
and  
Correspondence

Nicholas F. Angiulo  
Director  
Division of Appeals and Regulatory Affairs  
Civil Service Commission  
Written Record Appeals Unit  
P.O. Box 312  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312

c: Patrick Moses  
Lisa Gaffney  
Division of Agency Services  
Records Center